

CLAIMS

1. A method of monitoring inventory within a dispensing cabinet, the method comprising:

electronically sensing with an electronic inventory sensor whether an item is

5 removed from a dispensing cabinet;

electronically reporting from the inventory sensor to a remote inventory data center that an item is removed, the inventory data center being accessible over a secured internet connection;

10 permitting the quantity of the items within the dispensing cabinet to be monitored by a remote vendor over a computer network;

sending an electronic order from the inventory data center to the remote vendor to refill the removed item; and

refilling the dispensing cabinet with items supplied by the remote vendor.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic inventory sensor is a wand.

15 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic inventory sensor is a light beam.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic inventory sensor is a bracelet having a smart chip.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

breaking glass behind which the item is located.

20 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic inventory sensor is a fluid level sensor.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic inventory sensor is a magnetic card reader.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic inventory sensor comprises a radio-  
25 frequency antenna and a radio frequency identity chip on the item.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic inventory sensor comprises a pull out bin.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic inventory sensor comprises scanner.
11. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic inventory sensor comprises a scale.
- 5 12. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic inventory sensor comprises an IR pocket sensor.
13. A dispenser inventory monitor system, the system comprises:
  - a dispensing cabinet;
  - a remote inventory data center in electronic communication with the dispensing
  - 10 cabinet;
  - a remote vendor in electronic communication with the data center; and
  - a plurality of compartments in the dispensing cabinet, each compartment having an electronic inventory sensor associated with it to electronically monitor an inventory of an item within the compartment and to electronically report the inventory to the remote
  - 15 inventory data center, the data center sending an electronic order to the remote vendor for replacement of the item.
14. The system of claim 13, wherein the electronic inventory sensor is a wand.
15. The system of claim 13, wherein the electronic inventory sensor is a light beam.
16. The system of claim 13, wherein the electronic inventory sensor is a bracelet
- 20 having a smart chip.
17. The system of claim 13, wherein the item is located behind glass, and the electronic inventory sensor considers the item removed when the glass is broken.
18. The system of claim 13, wherein the electronic inventory sensor is a fluid level sensor.

19. The system of claim 13, wherein the electronic inventory sensor is a magnetic card reader.
20. The system of claim 13, wherein the electronic inventory sensor comprises a radio-frequency antenna and a radio frequency identity chip on the item.
- 5 21. The system of claim 13, wherein the electronic inventory sensor comprises a pull out bin.
22. The system of claim 13, wherein the electronic inventory sensor comprises scanner.
23. The system of claim 13, wherein the electronic inventory sensor comprises a scale.
- 10 24. The system of claim 13, wherein the electronic inventory sensor comprises an IR pocket sensor.

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